1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
514 Abipon 514

CHAPTER XV.

OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE ABIPONES.

157 The Abipones, in their whole deportment, preserve a decorum scarce credible to Europeans. Their countenance and gait display a modest cheerfulness, and manly gravity tempered with gentleness and kindness. Nothing licentious, indecent, or uncourteous, is discoverable in their actions. In their daily meetings, all is quiet and orderly. Confused vociferations, quarrels, or sharp words, have no place there. [522] They love jokes in conversation, but are averse [578] to indecency and ill-nature. If any dispute arises, each declares his opinion with a calm countenance and unruffled speech: they never break out into clamours, threats, and reproaches, as is usual to certain people of Europe. These [273] praises are justly due to the Abipones as long as they remain sober: but when intoxicated, they shake off the bridle of reason, become distracted, and quite unlike themselves. In their 576 assemblies, they maintain the utmost politeness. 623 One scarcely dares to interrupt another, when he is speaking. Whilst one man relates some

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
SI4 Abipon SI4
GUARANI SM4

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event of war, perhaps for half an hour together, all the rest not only listen attentively, but assent at every sentence, making a loud snort, as a sign of affirmation, which they every now and then express with these words: *quevorken*, certainly, *cleerà*, very true, and *chik akalagritan*, I don't in the least doubt it. *Ta yeegàm*, or *kem ekemat!* are exclamations of wonder. With these words, uttered with great eagerness, they interrupt the preacher in the midst of his discourse, thinking it a mark of respect. They account it extremely ill-mannered to contradict any one, however much he may be mistaken. They salute one another, and return the salute in these words: *La nauichi?* Now are you come? *La ñauè*, Now I am come. But in general, for the sake of brevity, both parties only use the word *Là*, pronounced with much emphasis. The same manner of saluting is usual to the Guaranies, who say *Ereyupà?* Are you come? *Ayù angà*, I am come. When tired of a conversation, they never depart without taking leave of the master of the house. The one who sits nearest to him, says: *Ma chik kla leyà?* Have we not talked enough? the second accosts the third, and the third the fourth, in the same words, till at length the last of the circle, seated on the ground, declares that they have talked enough: *Kla leyà*, upon

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1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
814 Abipon 814

576 which they all rise up together at one moment.
623 Each then courteously takes leave of the master of the house in these words, *Lahikyegarik:* now I am going from you; to which he replies, *La micherodè:* now you are going from me. The plebeian Indians say *Lahik*, now I am going. When at the door of the house, that is, at the place where they go out, for they have no doors, they turn to the master, and say, *Tamtaîa*, I shall see you again, an expression commonly made use of in our country. They would think it quite contrary to the laws of good-breeding, were they to meet any one, and not ask him where he was going: so that the word *Miekauè?* or *Miekauchitè?* where are you going? resounds in the streets.

586 595 The men think polygamy and divorce allowable, from the example of their ancestors, and of other American nations; but very few of the Abipones indulge in this liberty. Repudiation is much more common than a plurality of wives. But very many are content with one wife during the whole of their lives. They think it both wicked and disgraceful to have any illicit connection with other women; so that adultery is almost unheard-of amongst them. Both boys and girls display a native hilarity in their countenances, yet you never see them in company, or talking together.